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COUNTERNARCOTIC EFFORTS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE:  
ARGENTINA

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STRATEGY AND CAMPAIGN DEPARTMENT

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described as a way of demonstrating that the initiative favors the traffickers. Argentine court/legal framework and the law enforcement agencies' capabilities are analyzed. Argentine cooperation is presented from the international agreements' perspective, and a special attempt is made to relate the role of the Armed Forces. The essay concludes accepting the notion of the "hydraulic effect"<sup>1</sup>, and supports the idea that Argentina is giving its best effort in supporting international counter-narcotic actions. The epilogue stresses the need to change some aspects of the U.S. life-style to avoid losing the "war" on drugs.

Some concrete questions are answered:

- The "hydraulic effect" is taking place?
- Which are the current cooperative activities of the region?
- Which is the current drug problem in Argentina?
- Argentina can become like Colombia?
- How would impact any U.S. aid on sovereignty issues, as seen by Argentina?
- What would be the role of the Armed Forces in Argentina?
- Is there any linkage between narcotraffickers and terrorist groups in Argentina?
- Which are drug trafficking main patterns in Argentina?

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COUNTERNARCOTIC EFFORTS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE - ARGENTINA.

by

JULIO ENEAS GROSSO

Captain

Argentine Navy



The contents of this essay reflects my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Argentine Navy.

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Abstract of

**COUNTERNARCOTIC EFFORTS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE - ARGENTINA.**

This essay tries to present the current drug problem in Argentina and the ways in which cooperation with the United States is taking place.

Internal and external environments are explored in Chapter I, to obtain the major factors that intervene in counternarcotics policy-making and implementation. Political and economic background in Argentina are essential in grasping the situation and understanding constraints that affect decisions.

Geographical and cultural factors are considered that explain the current drug problem and Argentina's relations with neighbor countries. The actual amount of drug-addiction and lot seizures is confusing due to the lack of hard statistical data, which probably inaccurately reflect the true magnitude of the problem; this said, what figures exist are given to stress the difficulties faced. Trafficking patterns are described as a way of demonstrating that the initiative favors the traffickers. Additionally, the court/legal framework and the law enforcement agencies' capabilities are analyzed.

Argentine cooperation is viewed in Chapter II from the international agreements' perspective, and a special attempt is made relating the role of the Armed Forces. The essay concludes

in Chapter III, by accepting the notion of the "hydraulic effect"<sup>1</sup>, and supports the idea that Argentina is giving its best effort in supporting international counternarcotic actions. The epilogue in Chapter IV, stresses the need to change some aspects of the U.S. life-style to avoid losing the "war" on drugs. Some concrete questions are answered :

- The "hydraulic effect" is taking place?
- Which are the current cooperative activities of the region?
- Which is the current drug problem in Argentina?
- Argentina can became like Colombia?
- How would impact any U.S. aid on sovereignty issues, as seen by Argentina?
- What would be the role of the Armed Forces in Argentina?
- Is there any linkage between narcotraffickers and terrorist groups in Argentina?
- Which are drug trafficking main patterns in Argentina?

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<sup>1</sup> "Hydraulic effect": any effort to counter drugs in an area, if successful, will motivate drug-dealers to move their operations to another less resistant area. The phenomenon can be paralleled to the physical effect on uncompressible fluids: if pressure is applied in one area, it will be transmitted to the whole fluid and it will advance towards the direction of lower resistance.

## PREFACE

In August 1989, the Head of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations' Western Hemispheric Plans and Policy Branch (Op-613) in the Pentagon proposed to the Center of Naval Warfare Studies (CNWS) topics to be studied by the Argentine and Chilean Research Fellows. One of these was to consider the thesis dealing with the scenario that as counternarcotic efforts increase in the Andean region, the traditional narcotrafficking smuggling routes (now funnelled through Colombia) are hydraulically displaced to the south through Chile and/or the Rio de la Plata region of Argentina. Additionally, the study would include an assessment of both on-going and proposed United States/Argentina/Chile cooperative efforts.

After accepting the proposal in November 1989, two separate studies were conducted: March 1990--Argentina; May 1990--Chile. Both studies, although conducted separately, would employ the same procedure and ask the same questions, thereby allowing comparision and possible integration.

As current specific information on Argentina was not available in the United States, a research trip to the South American country was scheduled for me for March 1990. The trip was scheduled to allow me the opportunity of attending as a CNWS observer the Organization of American States (OAS) sponsored Seventh Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) Conference, held in Buenos Aires March 27 through March 30, 1990.

Attendance at this conference provided a regional perspective during the first phase of my trip. In the second phase, I conducted a series of interviews to obtain information from different Argentine authorities who have a stake in drug related issue. The interviewees included Argentina's Vice-President, Chairman of Narcotics Secretariat, Chairman of the Joint Staff, Chairman of the Navy General Staff, Navy Deputy Secretary General, Head of the Strategy and Policy Department of the Navy, Head of Naval Intelligence, Army Deputy Secretary General, Head of the Strategy and Policy Department of the Air Force, all law enforcement agencies, and in the presence of the U.S. Naval Attaché, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) representative.

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## COUNTERNARCOTIC EFFORTS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE - ARGENTINA

### INTRODUCTION

Each country has its own culture and life style; its different development process and it peculiar problems to be solved. Each country has its own interests to pursue. Statesmen must manage complex internal issues and attempt to make them compatible with pursued external national interests while considering the impact of the interests of other countries. This is not a simple task.

Argentina's relations with the United States have never been easy; the occasional cordial period punctuates the usual tense, often times acrimonious, relationship. Argentina's current economic situation is one where a cooperative approach with the United States makes good common sense.

On September 5, 1989 the President Bush announced the United States was embarking on a "War on Drugs" and that his administration was developing a National Drug Control Strategy which would include as a principle the cooperation of other countries in the fight it recognized that victory lay in combatting both the supply and demand sides of the narcotics problem. When issued in January 1990, the National Drug Control Strategy stressed the U.S. internal problem, stating unequivocally that demand is the number one driving factor. This new document does not supersede other drug control strategies, but updates and complements them. The goal remains the same:

"reduce the level of illegal use of drugs in America."

The war that the United States is waging is an opportunity for Argentine cooperation. No moral nation can refuse the fight against a truly real evil: drugs and their consequences.

Argentina also has a drug problem. This problem, however, pales when compared with the monumental U.S. drug crisis. This essay will try to present the current status of the drug problem in Argentina and try to find ways in which Argentina and the United States can cooperate to each other's mutual benefit.

## I. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Internal political and economic background.

The so called "dirty war" that Argentina suffered in the recent past, was won militarily but was lost politically. The 1982 Argentine defeat in the Malvinas/Falklands War, resulting in the total collapse of the military government, produced a profound crisis of self-confidence in the Argentine Armed Forces and discredited them in the eyes of the public at large. The transition to democracy was the natural outcome of people tired of ineffectual military rule. The Alfonsin Administration, installed in free elections, faced the daunting task of reconstructing national republican institutional forms. Alfonsin, reflecting his party's social democratic ideology and wanting to limit the military influence and participation in national politics, cast a new role for the country's armed forces, a role that emphasized a nonpolitical vision of military "professionalism".

A new national Defense Law was enacted in October 1986. The law formally jettisoned the previous Military Government's National Security Doctrine, taking from the armed forces their responsibility for the maintenance of internal national security, making it a police mission only.

Despite the Defense Law proscription against the use of the armed forces in the maintenance of civil order, Alfonsin was

forced to employ the armed forces to quell three different Army barrack revolts and to retake La Tablada Army Barracks after it had been seized in a bloody attack by 50 marxist terrorists on 23 January 1989. These were clear-cut examples that the government, in certain exceptional circumstances, would use the armed forces to secure internal order. After the La Tablada incident, President Alfonsin, by Executive Decree Number 327/89, modified the 1986 Defense Law to allow, as necessary, the employment of the armed forces under the control of the President through the civilian Minister of Defense to restore public order. Although some internal intervention of the military is now officially accepted, Argentine politicians, in general, are still very sensitive about anything that looks like a revival of the National Security Doctrine, which is seen as an opportunity for the military to intervene internally and could lead to a takeover of the government.

Political and economic failure forced Alfonsin to transfer his government five months before his constitutional six years term expired. Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem, the newly elected Peronist Party president, took office in July 1989 with the support of the majority of the Argentine people.

Under Menem, the Military, having been strongly censored by Alfonsin, has partially recovered its image and political status, as part of Menem's initiative to inaugurate a new period of peaceful relations amongst all the actors on the national scene.

On 1 May 1990, President Menem's Minister of Economy in his

report to the Argentine Congress asserted that the country's economic activity had not grown during the last 14 years, and that the real worth of salaries was now only half of what it was a decade ago. Additionally, he announced that the national external debt was \$64 billion and the unpaid interest \$5.5 billion. The success of the Menem economic plan depend on Argentina securing a \$1.5 billion credit from the international banking community. The March 1990 monthly inflation rate was 95.5%, estimates for April 1990 were projected for 12-15%.

The government is basing its policy on reducing the percentage of the state owned companies by "privatization". Labor unions, the backbone of the Peronist Party, worry about lay-offs; some business men are concerned with losing some of their privileges; both erecting political obstacles to thwart privatization measures. The government, sensing an erosion of public support, finds itself seeking a political alliance with the military.

## 2. Drugs in Argentina.

Drugs and their consequences are not new to Argentina. Neither can Argentina's drug problem be precisely defined. What is clear is the recent trend of increased illegal drug trafficking and consumption in the country. It is widely accepted that the increase in consumption correlates with the increase in drugs transitting the country. The number of drug

addicts in Argentina has more than doubled in the past 15 years. It is a matter of great national concern that younger and younger people are being caught possessing cocaine hydrochloride (HCl). The price of cocaine, which fell substantially in 1987 and may be comparatively low by global standards, is still considered to be exorbitant, beyond the reach of the average Argentine. Some government officials voice the concern that as national economic recovery proceeds, drug use will take off.

The most serious drug problem facing Argentina is the abuse of amphetamines and psychotropics. Abusers, conscious of abuse or not, are really drug addicts. Legal drugs are purchased over the counter in pharmacies or drug-stores with real or forged prescriptions. The abuse of legally available substances such as inhalants, diet pills, sedatives, et cetera, is worrisome.

Clandestine chemical drug production does not exist. 14,000 different legal drugs are produced in Argentina. 80% of the country's annual production is exported to Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru and Bolivia. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (INM) allegation that Argentina is becoming "a significant cocaine refining country" (INM, "International Narcotic Control Strategy Report", March 1989, pp. 55) was not confirmed to me by any of the Argentine law enforcement agencies I interviewed.

Argentina has no meaningful antiepidemiologic policy, and this lack of policy is reflected by a commensurate lack of statistical data, which makes it difficult to properly assess the

extent of real consumption of different drugs. Figures at the national level are, in some cases, only estimates and consequently highly subjective. Specific law enforcement agencies maintain their individual statistics of seizures and detentions, which for political purposes, are very often inflated or manipulated as a way to demonstrate their success vis-a-vis other agencies as a means of garnering their share of the budgetary pie. For example, the Aduana (Customs Bureau) cites the number of persons detained for alleged violations as opposed to the number adjudicated, a statistical criterion not used by other agencies' counts.

Appendix I, "Compared National Statistics of Cases, Seizures and Detention of Law Offenders," presents and compares official national cocaine HCl consumption statistics from 1979 through the first semester of 1989. The data immediately demonstrates that Argentine cocaine HCl consumption is insignificant, and when compared to that of the United States is almost meaningless, comparing two very different economies of scale. The Argentine consumption is estimated to be 300 kilos of cocaine HCl per annum, consumed by about 300,000 drug abusers, amongst whom approximately 80,000 to 100,000 users can be classified as drug addicts. I believe these "official" figures are inflated for political purposes: to ease the problem of the mobilization of the Argentine public, enlisting its support in the "noble" fight against the evils of drug abuse; and to give the impression that Argentina stands with the United States in its war against drugs,

with the hope of accruing U.S. favor and largesse.

Most Argentine consumption of cocaine HCl occurs in the nation's larger big cities and in the smaller, tourist dependent centers (attracting monied tourist with an active night life) like Mendoza, San Rafael, Malargue, Bariloche, San Martin de los Andes, Comodoro Rivadavia, Mar del Plata, et cetera.

Prior to and including 1985, only small quantities of contraband passed through Argentina. Since 1985 seizure statistics show that the amount transiting the country has doubled annually, reaching in 1988 a level almost ten times that of 1984. Doubts will always exist: Is the increase due to increased trafficking, or is it the result of more aggressive enforcement? For the most part, the drugs seized have been destined primarily for the United States and Europe, with a portion of the European share intended for transshipment to the United States. Since an economic point of view, an assessment of prices can be done: 2 kilos of "basic paste" in Bolivia cost \$2,000 US; the same substance in Buenos Aires cost \$ 2,500 US, and after being processed the added value is significantly increased to \$ 6,500 US in the same city. The same product in the United States cost \$ 20,000 US, and in Europe \$ 70,000 US. This is a way to explain the trend of improving processing in Bolivia, the signals of processing in Argentina, but mainly the flow of illegal exports to the US after covering the European market that looks more profitable. Demand, and the pursuit of profit (as dictated by the free market, albeit in this case, illegal) is the

force driving the business.

The demand for marihuana (the drug of choice in Argentina) is satisfied mostly by smuggling it from neighboring countries, complemented with small quantities of local production. Other stronger narcotics like heroin or opium are consumed in very low quantities.

The chewing of coca leaves (cocuao), deserves special mention. The habit exists amongst the indigenous Indian population of the Northwest of Argentina and, as with the similar groups in the rest of the Andean countries, has been practiced since the beginning of their civilization. Due to natural conditions and geography, Argentine soil is not conducive to the growing of coca. Historically, coca leaves have been imported from Bolivia. Since 1938, spurred by a concern for the health of coca chewers, series of measures have been taken to limit consumption or abolish use altogether. In 1954, the government declared an area of 220.000 km<sup>2</sup> (comprising the provinces of Jujuy, Salta and Tucumán) a "free coca consumption zone", and further decreed that this "free" area would be decrease by 10,000 Km<sup>2</sup> per annum, so that by 1976 no area would exist and consumption therefore would be illegal. In 1965 Argentina ratified with reservation the International Narcotics Convention of 1961 which calls for the prohibition on coca chewing, but did not change its policy concerning the implementation of the 1954 Free Coca Consumption Zone law. In 1973 the Argentine Law (AL) Nr. 20,771 declared coca chewing illegal. The Vienna Convention

of 1988 (yet to be ratified by Argentina) again called for the prohibition on coca chewing. In September 1989, in Article 15 of AL Nr. 23,737, AL Nr. 20,771 of 1973 was superseded, and coca chewing is again allowed.

It is more than a question of moral and/or legal principles; it is a debate that arises out, due to local economic interests. There are those who doubt the validity of so-called claims to ancestral cultural rights and "physiological need" created by the need to curb altitude sickness (apunamiento), saying that indigenous Andean people are perfectly adapted to living at such heights and need not chew coca at all. On the other side, no one is surprised when a local federal judge comes out of the closet and announces that he is a practicing coqueo. The debate continues.

Today around 180,000 persons still chew coca in the provinces of Jujuy and Salta; almost no one chews in Tucumán. The extent of the Coqueo area is graphically defined in Appendix II.

Another area in which Argentina is involved is the illegal chemicals and precursors exports to Bolivia. The Argentine industrial capability and improving cocaine processing technology in Bolivia make it highly profitable for drug dealers to exchange some cocaine base-paste for bulk precursors.

All agencies interviewed agreed that there is no connection between Argentina drug traffickers and terrorist groups in the Andean countries. The only relation in Argentina between subversive and illegal drugs was during the "dirty war" when

Argentine terrorists used drugs to affect the "courage" that allowed them to carry out their operations.

### 2.1 Trafficking patterns.

The main trafficking patterns are obvious and relatively well determined for cocaine and marihuana. Alternative routes ~~are~~ abound. Profits are so high and the cost of shipping so low (when compared to the drug's fetching price), it is relatively easy for drug traffickers to respond to interdiction along any one route by changing routes. This elastic response ~~makes~~ renders any assertion that patterns are fixed as meaningless (see Appendices II, III and IV). Example: On 18 April 1990, the Argentine Coast Guard (Prefectura Naval Argentina), interdicted the Peruvian flag ship Mar Pacifico in the Argentine port of Quequen in the Province of Buenos Aries and seized more than 200 kilos of cocaine located in hidden compartments in the ship's superstructure. The Mar Pacifico circuitous route originated in Callao, Peru, passed through the Panama Canal, and called at Santos, Brazil, before arriving at Quequen.

Law enforcement agencies believe that illegal drug shipments through Argentina are accomplished 65% of the time by air, 25% by land, and 5% by water. Small lots of cocaine HCl are most frequently transported by air; the occasional large lot is most often transported in maritime ships.

There is a falsely held belief that smugglers use off-the-

beaten path routes, across difficult terrain to cross the Argentine border. One can competently assert, without completely disregarding the possibility of the furtive routes, that normal smugglers prefer to use the normal, well maintained public thoroughfares and use the normal means of transportation, i.e., automobiles, trucks, cargo ships or airplanes.

Nevertheless it can be said that the standard routes along which the different substances are imported or exported from the country are as following:

a) Coca leaves, and base paste. Coca will not grow in Argentina. The main source is Bolivia. The primary smuggling route has always been and remains through the northern provinces of Jujuy and Salta (paths of La Quiaca, Orán and Yacuiba). Until 1988, cocaine base paste has been the bulk of the illegal trade. Since then, the Border Police has indications that more cocaine HCl processing activity is occurring in Bolivia, spurred on by the ever increasing sophistication of laboratory processing technology available in Bolivia. The indicators are based on the increasing incidence of cocaine HCl seizure along the tradition transit routes in Argentina and seizures of processing chemicals and precursors originating in Argentina and exported to Bolivia. Evidence exist that the amount of cocaine base paste being processed into cocaine HCl is increasing in Argentina. Five cocinas (laboratories) have been broken up in Mercedes, in the vicinity of the Federal Capital. Although the production capacity of these cocinas was small, the cocaine HCl produced

serviced a growing Buenos Aires street market.

After crossing the northern border, the flow of traffic is directed toward Tucumán, then to Córdoba and from thence to Buenos Aires or Bariloche. The greater part of cocaine HCl trafficking Argentina is destined for the United States and/or Europe. In an exposed "Medellin cartel" operation known as the OPERACIÓN LANGOSTINO (OPERATION SHRIMP), a fishing vessel transporting 600 kilos of cocaine HCl hidden in tins of canned fish was tracked from Mar del Plata to Florida where the substance was combined with other shipments and eventually 1.7 metric tons of cocaine HCl were seized in Pennsylvania. This operation was disrupted through the combined coordination of the Argentine Federal Police, Argentine Customs and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) which initiated the case.

Most cocaine HCl shipped from Argentina to Europe is reexported to the United States. In Europe the most common transshipment country is Spain. Some Argentine deliveries to the United States are sent via Australia; others sent via Belgium and Canada. There is a body of opinion that supports the idea that the Argentine human typology, being the most European of Latin Americans, make the best couriers to evade first European customs, then U.S. customs.

A peculiar way to smuggle drugs to and/or through to the country is to steal a car in Argentina, drive it to Paraguay and load 1 to 2 kilos (depending on the size of the automobile) of Bolivian cocaine HCl. Using this method, drugs can be delivered

from Bolivia to the streets, the international port or airport of Buenos Aires in under 30 hours.

b) Marijuana. The main entrance is through the northeastern provinces of Formosa and Misiones. The primary source is Paraguay. Argentine law enforcement agencies have evidence that the Paraguayan Army protects rather than eradicates marijuana plantations in the Amambay and Juan Caballero areas. A secondary route is through the province of Corrientes, and in this case, the source is Brazil. Some marijuana is smuggled from Chile through Mendoza and Neuquen provinces. The transportation method is varied: air, land or rivers. The quantity is small, defined as "ant smuggling" (small time). All the marihuana is smuggled for internal consumption only. It is not reexported. Marijuana can be grown just about anywhere in the country. Local production supplements the smuggled drug. The larger plantations have been discovered in the province of Misiones (1 hectare). A particular case is the one of "El Bolsón". El Bolsón is a small village in the south of the country where a hippie community settled about a decade ago. Periodically small plantations of marihuana are discovered and eradicated. The more potent sin semilla kind of marijuana is now finding its way into the market.

c) Precursors and chemicals. As previously stated, precursors and cocaine HCl processing chemicals originate in Argentina and are shipped to Bolivia. The Argentine Public Health Ministry regulates chemical production and officially attempts to control internal distribution. Because of rapid

chemical product innovation, the list of products under special control are updated periodically by Executive Order. All exporters require a special license and authorization for each shipment to ship chemicals out of the country. All permits indicate type and quantity of chemical and destination to which the chemical is being exported. A receipt of delivery is obtained for each shipment exported. The Customs Bureau is required to keep the files in a data bank, to be available upon demand for national authority oversight. Chemical stockpiling requires justification and a permit. Chemicals and precursors used in drug manufacturing can not be stockpiled within the 100 km "Border Zone". Additionally, it is forbidden to process the paperwork for the export permits in the Border Zone. The paperwork can only be done in Buenos Aires.

Smuggling is accomplished by basically two methods: non-declared or in small quantities of 1/2 liter or less labelled as "ant smuggling". The most common chemicals trafficked are acetone and ether. The incidence of smuggling of these products is increasing: 1,633 liters seized in 1987; 5,516 liters in 1988. What might be a legal chemical export from Argentina, with delivery receipts and all, becomes an illegal one once delivered in Bolivia, for the Bolivian government makes only a cursory attempt at controlling chemical movements within its own territory. Law enforcement agencies complain that 100 km Border Zone is too small an area to maintain effective control and desire the area be enlarged.

The main Argentine chemical manufacturers are two private firms: Duperial (Dupont) and Atanor; and the government's Fabricaciones Militares under the Ministry of Defense.

3. Legal framework.

The Alfonsin government attempted to correct deficiencies in national narcotics control laws by Presidential Decree Nr. 365, signed in September 1986, and later by a comprehensive antidrug bill (AL Nr. 20,015) passed in the Senate the same year. The law proposed toughening several parts of the existing one, to include stiffer penalties for illegal production, trafficking and export of narcotic drugs. It proposed tightening controls on precursors chemicals, thereby intending to widen the scope of the September 1986 decree. In addition, the AL Nr. 20,015 provided, to limited extent, for the forfeiture of assets. The Chamber of Deputies has never acted on the bill because it could never resolve various controversies, one of which was a debate on Art. 6 of the law providing for the criminalization of the possession of small amounts of illicit drugs for personal use. Had it been enacted, the Argentine Supreme Court was prepared to declare declared Article Nr. 6 nonconstitutional, thereby voiding the entire law, maintaining the position that penalizing the possession of drugs for personal use was in direct contradiction of Art. 19 of the National Constitution protection of human rights and liberties clause.

The current Peronist government complains that their administration assumed office without an adequate antidrug law and that the law enforcement agencies lack of a coherent joint strategy and the logistic support to counter the problem, in brief: lack a plan to counter narcotrafficking.

The Menem government pushed to get a new antidrug law which was promulgated on 10 October 1989 (AL Mr. 23,737). This law criminalizes narcotics possession, and calls for prison sentences of one to six years of prison for individuals caught with small amounts for personal use. Since enactment, the Argentine Criminal Code has also modified.

Beginning with the Alfonsin administration, the Argentine government has responded to U.S. extradition requests, requests for narcotics offenders, even though the existing treaty does not automatically require the extradition of nationals. Pursuant to domestic law, any national can opt for trial in Argentina in lieu of extradition.

A basic philosophical legal problem of Argentine Law facing law enforcement agencies is the provision relating to "charge evidence", by which individuals are presumed innocent until proven guilty. In Argentine law, like U.S. law, the burden of proof falls on the state. "Charge evidences" must be perfect to avoid dismissal. Special training is necessary to overcome the difficulties of proving guilt.

One major factor constraining interagency coordination efforts is the law limiting access to files of people involved in

criminal cases. Access to one agency's files by another must either be court approved or accepted by the person implicated.

In the international counternarcotics arena, Argentina ratified "The United Nations International Antidrug Convention (1961) in 1965. Argentina is in the advanced stages of the ratification process of the "United Nations Convention Against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988, also called "Vienna Convention"). When ratified, the country will be committed to the enforcement of international legal agreements on:

- Extradition
- Assets forfeiture
- Mutual legal assistance
- Cooperation among national and international law enforcement agencies
- Precursors and essential chemicals control
- Crop eradication
- Money laundering (considered a crime)

So, Argentina will soon have a comprehensive legal framework adequate to tackle the drug trafficking and related crimes.

#### 4. Argentine drug law enforcement agencies.

Argentine antidrug law enforcement community involves a number of competing organizations with overlapping jurisdictions. This situation often inhibits information-sharing and effective enforcement. Drug enforcement is also hampered by severe budgetary constraints that all government agencies face as a result of Argentina's acute economic problems.

Drug enforcement investigation responsibilities are shared by four Federal law enforcement agencies: Customs, the Border Guard, the Coast Guard and the Federal Police. There also exist 22 independent provincial police forces, each responsible for all police duties in its respective jurisdiction. The Buenos Aires Provincial Police has maintained an antinarcotics unit for more than thirteen years. By 1985/86 nearly all other provinces set up such units. These provincial units lack experience and adequate training.

No senior government official has ever been indicted for narcotic related corruption. However, corruption exists but it is recognized as individual and not institutional. Neither is corruption faced openly nor in meetings amongst law enforcement agencies. Corruption affects all police units; it is not limited to narcotic units. The problem has become more pervasive since 1988 as real salaries have declined and as societal strain has increased due to Argentina's worsening political and economic problems. The government is taking actions to fight against

corruption and similar ethical problems. Vice President Dr. Eduardo Duhalde spearheads efforts in this area.

#### 4.1 Customs.

Customs is subordinate to the Ministry of Economy. As part of its routine tasks it conducts narcotics smuggling investigations. It is regulated by the Argentine Customs Code (AL Mrs. 22,415 and 23,353), and has jurisdiction in the entire national territory.

Despite its lack of significant resources and personnel (3,500 agents in total) the agency is very efficient. Due to the increasing illegal drug trade, and the Menem administration's increased efforts counter trafficking, the agency now has the unique opportunity to increase their personnel strength, while at the same time improving the quality of training. Recent agency structural changes are aimed at streamlining operations. The Dangerous Drugs Department has been reorganized enabling it to deal more efficiently with all drug related problems. Its department head reports directly to the National Customs Administrator. Its mission includes the control of illegal actions, prevention and law enforcement related with the trafficking of dangerous drugs (defined as narcotics, psychotropics, precursors and essential chemicals or assets used by the traffickers or drug-addicts).

The Customs Information Division gathers all related

information. The Information Division's National Migrations Directorate maintains files of all passengers or pilots flying, and requires airlines provide reservation lists for all future flights, paying particular scrutiny to so called "high risk flights" which originate in "supply countries". Because of the dynamic nature of the traffickers' operations, the Directorate also maintains a data base of "modus operandi", means of transportation, companies under suspicion, arrested persons, suspicious persons, et cetera. The intelligence this information provides allows for effective counternarcotics operations planning. Additionally, the Directorate studies different ways to control luggage and cargo. Its jurisdiction extends throughout the entire national territory, but it concentrates its efforts on "hot border crossings" like: La Quiaca, Pocitos, Orán, Clorinda, Posadas and Iguazú. At such crossings, it maintains a photographic file that enables agents to check names with faces against as a way to confirm suspicious identity.

Ministry personnel visit laboratories where ether, acetone, sulfuric acid, potassium permanganate and others chemicals related to illegal drug production are manufactured as a way to control the national/international movement of such products. A complete computerized file is kept, and active communication with like international agencies is carried on to verify such products' legal delivery. An automated communication network with the Customs delegations in each province is served by highly trained personnel. Frequent inspections of interior field

offices provides adequate supervision. Information exchange with other enforcement agencies is reasonably fluid. It is interesting to note that Art. Nr. 23 of the Argentine Customs Code requires Customs coordinate its activities with other enforcement agencies (which is logical), to include the Armed Forces. Customs recognizes it has some coordination problems other agencies, particularly with the Federal Police. Additionally, it also recognizes it has occasional corruption. Some high customs executives have expressed a willingness to operate with the Argentine Navy.

Its relation with police attachés to the embassies of the Federal Republic of Germany, United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand is permanent. There is a particularly active relation with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (since 1985) and the U.S. Customs (which is long standing). For example, Argentine Customs provides DEA with information monthly on the export and import of potential chemicals or precursors that can be used in drugs processing, indicating each items destination and an assessment of the proportionality of quantities and the supposed destination. These same Customs personnel regularly prepare instructional syllabi and teach courses to other Argentine Customs personnel.

Finally, the Information Division carries on financial investigations of suspicious persons and/or companies whose quick enrichment may be the result of narcotrafficking.

The Operations Division's activities are basically confined

to the area of people or cargo control. It supervises most of the personnel assigned to the Customs agency. These agents are highly experienced and specialized. The division also has an aggressive drug detector dog program. The "preservation of proof" (establishing a chain of custody for evidence obtained) is critical to successful operations, and allows the division to obtain criminal indictments of individuals apprehended in the normal course of operations. Like other divisions, one of the Operations Division's major problems is lack of resources, which is particularly acute in the area of containerized cargo. It simply does not have the personnel nor financial resources to control all the containers that enter and leave the country. The division suffers from a lack of continuity because of rapid turn over of personnel induced by the general climate of national political instability.

#### 4.2 Border Guard (Gendarmeria Nacional).

The Border Guard was created in 1938. It is a quasi-military force under the control of the Ministry of Interior, and is responsible for the protection of Argentina's 9,640 km border (3,600 km of which separates Argentina from countries that produce cocaine or marihuana). Its jurisdiction includes the "Border Zone", a zone 100 km deep immediately adjacent to the national frontier. In addition to its border control mission, it is responsible for the physical security of facilities designated

as critical to the national security, i.e., nuclear facilities and airports; required to cooperate with other agencies in controlling the designated 100 km "Border Zone"; and in the case of war and when directed by Presidential Order, required to cooperate with military planning authorities.

This specialized Security Force has had actual experience in working in drug control enforcement since 1949. In 1973, with the enactment of the law 20,771, drug related offenses came under federal jurisdiction and consequently the Gendarmeria became more deeply involved drug enforcement issues. The Gendarmeria has about 32,000 men to cover all its tasks and functions.

#### 4.3 Coast Guard (Prefectura Naval Argentina).

The Coast Guard is responsible for patrolling and law enforcement on all the nation's waterways and in all its seaports. It shares narcotics enforcement authority with Customs in the seaports. The agency's history dates back to the colonial period. It has always had police powers. Although the Coast Guard has been involved in antidrug interdiction efforts since its beginning, its activity in this area has increased markedly in the last 20 years. The agency has made counterdrug efforts its number one priority, and has initiated several programs to update its capability to deal with the problem, undertaking personnel exchanges with other national law enforcement agencies, the United Nation International Narcotics

Secretariat, Interpol, DEA, et cetera.

Its jurisdiction includes more than 3,000 km of navigable rivers and lakes in the most difficult geographical environment, this includes cities and ports, rivers, lakes, jungle, land and air routes of: a) Paraná and Paraguay River systems along the border with Brazil and Paraguay; b) Uruguay River system that separates the country from Brazil and Uruguay; c) Argentine "Delta" the head of the Plate River estuary extensive nautical activities; d) the Port of Buenos Aires and its immediate vicinity; e) the lower Plate River shared with Uruguay, where most of the nation's riverine and maritime commercial activity is concentrated.

The Brazilian "Hidrovia" initiative, to open up and accelerate development of the Upper Plate River done with the approval and cooperation of the five countries of the Plate River Basin (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay), will significantly increase the flow of international shipping on the Paraná and Paraguay rivers and will be a step in the right direction toward regional integration. A large geographical area contained in the Hidrovia Project is under Argentine jurisdiction. Therefore, this geopolitical decision means that as river traffic increases, so must Argentine Coast Guard and Customs activity increase.

As expected, the Argentine Coast Guard jurisdictional responsibility extends along the nation's entire Atlantic Ocean coast line, and to the southern inland lakes of Bariloche and

Neuquén bordering with Chile and to the Paraná River (15,000 km) internal to Argentina before it merges with the River Plate.

About half of the Argentine Coast Guard 100 or so units are deployed in critical drug trafficking areas. Of a total manpower pool of 4,500, 500 are dedicated exclusively to the investigation, patrolling and control of the narcotrafficking, using 20 patrol boats of medium size, and larger number of smaller craft. The Coast Guard is overextended. It lacks manpower and equipment (boats, trailing vehicles and communications) to allow it to exercise a proper control.

The already mentioned Operación Langostino stressed the magnitude of maritime smuggling in and through Argentina. Of the total annual of seizure of 1,300 kilos, almost half (600 kilos) was seized in this single maritime operation. The classic advantage that maritime shipping (large tonnage, shipped at reduced prices) offers, when enhanced by the high specific value of narcotics, means that the Coast Guard can expect ever increasing activity in the near- and midterm.

#### 4.4 Federal Police (Policía Federal).

The Argentine Federal Police, subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior, has more resources at its disposal than any other federal agency dedicated to counternarcotic investigations. Its total manpower is 37,000. It has since 1972 maintained the computerized Unified Data Center. Since 1974 the agency's drug

control emphasis has been increasing: at first drug issues were handled at the Departmental level; in 1984/85 it was elevated to the General Director level; in 1988, the Superintendent level.

The other national law enforcement agencies recognize that interagency relations amongst themselves are sometimes strained. All agree that relations with the Federal Police are the most difficult, asserting that the Federal Police is the most corrupt. This is probably due to the agency's size and preeminence of power, therefore its greater visibility.

The Minister of the Interior controls the Chief of the Federal Police, and regional Chiefs report directly to him. Due to decentralization, it is impossible for the Minister of the Interior to control the sheriffs of each municipality. Too much power is exercised by these public officials. The Federal Police recognizes that corruption is a big problem, not only as it relates to the agency, but to all. Investigations and cases are restricted as much as possible to 6 persons as a preemptive measure to avoid information leakage and case compromise.

The Federal Police has recently obtained two grants in aid from the United States through the auspices of Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD). One grant of \$220,000 US will go to the purchase of arms and equipment to be employed in drug enforcement. The second grant of \$480,000 US will be used to create and equip an information network to be under control of the Federal Police, but will be manned and information shared by all national law enforcement agencies. This initiative will

increase interagency interoperability and hopefully interagency relations and cooperation. Initially the network will concentrate on gathering and disseminating narcotrafficking statistics, trafficker biographies and modus operandi type of information.

The newly announced deterrence strategy of the Federal Police, designed to disrupt what has become normal in the illicit business, stresses that the trafficker, when apprehended, will have his assets and belongings (houses, cars, boats, money) seized.

The Federal Police is reluctant to have the Armed Forces participate in the war on drugs, maintaining that the efforts requires police and not military skills.

##### 5. National Antidrug Policy.

The Alfonsin government, in Presidential Decree Nr. 1383/85, created the National Commission for Narcotrafficking Control and Drug Abuse (COCONAD) as a measure to counter the clear upward trend of narcotrafficking activity in the country. In 1986 COCONAD recommended the creation of an open, integrated data systems network and equipment to be use amongst all law enforcement agencies.

In 1988 the National Commission was restructured and chaired by President Alfonsin himself. Two subordinate working groups were formed: 1) antidrug law enforcement and 2) drug abuse

prevention. The commission's main goal was to facilitate a more vigorous coordination of law enforcement efforts. This goal has not yet been realized.

With the new Menem administration, narcotics control received an even higher priority from the Argentine government. In July 1989, all government antidrug efforts were consolidated under a newly created Narcotics Secretariat (Secretaría de Programación y Coordinación para la Prevención de la Drogadicción y la Lucha Contra el Narcotráfico), with its Chairman, Dr. Eduardo Lestelle, reporting directly to President Menem.

The National Policy, approved by the President Menem, includes the following objectives:

- Improve drug control.
- Balance demand and supply of medicated drugs.
- Eliminate supply and availability of illegal drugs.
- Eliminate narcotrafficking or reduce it to a minimum.
- Reduce demand through of motivation (education) and legal deterrence (laws).
- Provide special education programs covering the subject through out the country.
- Provide treatment, rehabilitation and social recovery services.

The courses of action that are being taken means:

- A planned institutional organization.
- The balanced intervention of the three branches of the Federal Government.

- Federal action in the provinces.
- A county level commitment.
- Development of an up to dated legal framework.
- Reinforcement of competent law enforcement agencies.
- Community training.
- International cooperation.
- Agency to oversee a global policy.

The strong U.S. position that considers the "War on Drugs" a matter of their "national security", the ongoing combined United States/Andean nations counternarcotic efforts, and the United States'conditioning of foreign aid contingent on cooperation in counternarcotic efforts, impels Argentina to pursue interests compatible to those of the United States. The weak economic situation of Argentina requires this posture, separate from any independent, altruistic and moral consideration Argentina might have.

During my interview Argentina's Vice President Dr. Eduardo Duhalde he stated that, in his view, any help Argentina might obtain from the United States in fighting the Argentine "War on Drugs" would not impinge on Argentine sovereignty. This perspective was reinforced in a later interview with Dr. Lestelle.

The activities of the new Narcotics Secretariat are viewed, in general, as being more preemptively oriented rather than law enforcement. It is very proud of its prevention and education programs, which are growing fast, with 450 teachers trained and

20 centers in operation.

Law enforcement, however, is not forgotten. On 23 October 1989, a "Interagency Strategy Commission" was created to centralize and coordinate the efforts of the law enforcement agencies. It meets monthly, and includes a representative from the U.S. DEA. The group has decided to include regional and provincial police representatives.

The Argentine government has serious reservations concerning the U.S. strategy that concentrates its efforts and aid in combatting illegal trafficking in only the supply countries. Any effort to eradicate the drug problem in one country, will only result in the "cartels" moving to a neighboring country, unless simultaneous action is taken through the entire region. Despite the manifestation of the "hydraulic effect" of drug trafficking into Argentina taking place, the possibility of the country to become a "new Colombia" is very low. Why not? On one hand, the Argentine government and people are aware and concerned. Some concrete preemptive measures are being taken, like updating the laws, improved drug and chemicals control, special education programs, better law enforcement coordination, et cetera, all in the framework of a very high governmental priority. On the other hand, Brazil is a more vulnerable candidate. It is contiguous to Colombia, making it easy to translocate operations. Everything seems to be already in place: the coca varietal Ipanu grows in Brazil; it has the technology to provide chemicals and precursors; and it has the vast expanse of the Amazon in which to

hide laboratories. Having all the prerequisite conditions, it is not necessary to cross any border and this makes the whole operation is simpler. Cocaine HCl laboratories are already working in Manaos, Corumba and Rio de Janeiro.

### III. COOPERATIVE COUNTERNARCOTIC ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Argentina in the Antidrug International Forum.

There are several international organizations in which Argentina is an active participant. It has a visible and active role in United Nations Organization (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS). It is seen as a leader in bilateral dialogues with other South American countries.

In 1965 Argentina ratified the UN International Antidrug Convention of 1961. In April 1968, Argentina participated in the OAS' sponsored Inter-American Specialized Conference on Narcotrafficking (Rio Program), held in Rio de Janeiro, during which the "Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission" (CICAD) was created. CICAD representatives meet every six months and produce an annual report on different drug-related matters. The seventh conference was held in Buenos Aires during March 1990, in which Argentina was named commission president through March 1991.

In 1988, Argentina signed an "Act of Understanding" with Venezuela and Colombia pledging a coordinated effort against narcotrafficking.

On April 30, 1988, the Ministers of the Interior of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay signed an "Agreement Act", which addressed trilateral policy coordination, and information exchange relating to prevention, law enforcement, treatment and

drug addict rehabilitation. During the ratification process, completed in August 1988, Argentina expressed a special concern on the need to coordinate of control chemicals and precursors, and the exchange of information concerning the commercial transactions of said products. During the same period a similar bilateral agreement was signed with Bolivia.

The policy of information exchange is used not only to conduct coordinated regional counterdrug operations, but also as an instructional resource in different courses taught in each nation's national institutions. Bi- and/or multilateral cooperation in the international community is routine.

Coming out of the Sixth International Drug Enforcement Conference (INDEC VI), held in Guatemala in 1988, was the proposal: "... to conduct simultaneous operations in border areas where the drug trafficking is supposed to be intense and in accordance with the previous agreements in force". In response, on 27 April 1988 the "Buenos Aires Group" (meeting in Buenos Aires) representatives of Paraguay, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and the U.S. DEA, agreed to conduct simultaneous counterdrug operations in August 1988. The operational objectives (similar to those proposed by the "Lima Group") targeted airports, border crossings, riverways, air strips (legal and illegal), roads, cities, plantations, et cetera. Additionally, an exchange of information between Lima Group countries with shared borders of countries in the Buenos Aires Group would be attempted.

Argentina's four law enforcement agencies (Customs, Federal

Police, Border Guard and Coast Guard) participated in the 1-20 August 1988 operations. The results were not as good as expected. The operation clearly established such operations pose a heavy financial burden on the economically strapped participant countries and that no credible extraregional assistance was available. One important lesson was learned : do not make press announcements concerning counterdrug operations. In spite of the recommendation by the Buenos Aires Group to hold a post-operation meeting, no meeting was held. Only a few of the participating countries bothered to submitted a postoperation report to the Permanent Secretary of IDEC for analysis and further distribution. An extract of the Buenos Aires Group after action report is contained in Appendix VI.

Other counterdrug operations or meetings of note involving Argentine law enforcement agencies:

- June 1988: The Federal Police hosted a meeting of Interpol in Buenos Aires to discussed drug control issues.
- September 1988: Customs and the Federal Police officials attended a specialized counterdrug course in Uruguay.
- October 1988: The Minister of the Interior hosted a meeting of eight regional ministers in Buenos Aires to discuss drug control issues.
- March 1989: By "Mutual Cooperation Agreement" signed with the United States. The United States provided six specialized vehicles to improve mobility of law

enforcement agencies in the six northern provinces bordering Bolivia.

During the February 1990 Cartegena Drug Summit, the OAS committed itself to the development and implementation of a regional Inter-American agreement to control essential chemicals.

Following through, during a 19-23 March 1990 in Buenos Aires in a CICAD (OAS) sponsored "Fourth Meeting of Experts on Precursors and Chemical Substances" it was recommended that:

"... [all nation with representatives at the meeting] monitor and control the production, manufacture, preparation, importation, exportation, distribution, and/or other type of transaction involving chemicals, precursors and other specific chemical products, machines and materials used in the production, manufacture, preparation, or extraction of narcotic drugs, psychotropic or other substances having a similar effect."

This recommendation would be applicable in all national jurisdictions, including free trade zones and free ports, or other similar facilities. The meeting also went on to propose a list of standardized definitions, a list of chemicals and precursors used in illegal drug production, licensing requirements, records to be maintained, reports to be made, imports and export requirements, transshipment and transit requirements, acts considered to be criminal offenses and other such recommendations to be made by CICAD to the OAS.

The results of meeting were immediately discussed during the 27-30 March 1990 Seventh Regular Session of the CICAD (also held in Buenos Aires). A report was prepared for presentation in the Nineteenth Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly. Concrete

recommendation were reported along five lines of action:

a. Legal Development. Approved were "Recommendations for Model Regulations to Control Chemicals, Precursors and Chemicals Substances, Machines and Materials", using the provisions of the 1988 Vienna Convention. Should enactment ensue, the Western Hemisphere as a region will have the world's most advanced legislation on the subject. Recommended that in a follow-on meeting experts address money laundering related problems. Lastly, seminar-workshop, to be sponsored by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, was scheduled for July 1990.

b. Prevention Education. Approved were recommendations to incorporate drug prevention programs into the all the schools of the hemisphere and to develop new, effective approaches to reach and involve street children and other high-risk youth in antidrug efforts. CICAD endorsed the findings of four separate Inter-American work-shops held in Uruguay, Grenada, Mexico and Argentina and commended the implementation of the Inter-American Education Prevention Program formulated in a hemispheric-wide meeting held in Ecuador. CICAD members noted and were encouraged by the support give by the October 1989 Twentieth Annual Meeting of Ministers of Education, which carefully analyzed the topic of "Education and the Challenge of Drug Abuse", and endorsed close working relations with CICAD in the implementation of education prevention programs.

Noted were efforts funded by the Inter-American Development Bank: 1) the completion of the first phase of a Binational

Argentina-Uruguay Program on demand reduction; 2) the initiation of a study by a Argentine specialist to analyze the drug problem amongst the street children of Bogotá, Caracas, Cochabamba, Lima and São Pablo.

c. Community Mobilization. Exhorted the private sector of the member states (the media, corporations, the advertising community and private voluntary organizations) to fund and support private actions to broaden public understanding of the drug problem and to cover essential prevention, treatment and rehabilitation efforts which the public sector cannot provide. Endorsed and commended a multinational cooperative program for promoting community action against drug use initiated in Argentina with the support of Mexico and the University of Oklahoma.

d. The Uniform Drug Statistical System. Endorsed anew the "Rio Program" and reported on the three established CICAD statutory services operated for the benefit of the member states:

- Inter-American Data Bank. Up and running. The data base has been substantially increased. Working relations have been established with drug data collection agencies in the various member states. Site visits have been made to Argentina, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico and Uruguay.
- Inter-American Training Centers. Due to a shortage of funds, no new training activities were undertaken in 1989. A substantial training agenda is scheduled for 1990/91.

- Inter-American Documentation Center. Has been established at CICAD headquarters, and a specialized collection of materials, publications and audio-visuals on the drug problem in the member states has been developed.

e. The Inter-American Drug Information System. The initial design of the system has been completed, and the architecture for its installation has been defined. The Commission of European Communities has made a grant of approximately \$700,000 US to finance the initial setting up phase and the operation of a network of cooperating centers.

## 2. The Armed Forces and the "War on Drugs".

Historically, as a member of national political culture, the Argentine military establishment has been frequently involved in the nation's internal political affairs. Since 1930 the Armed Forces have ruled the country during six periods initiated by coups d'etat. This is very different from the role of the U.S. Armed Forces, which in the course of the 200 plus years of U.S. history, has never imposed a national military government.

After the success of the Cuban Revolution and communist penetration of the hemisphere, Fidel Castro along with Che Guevara developed the "foco"<sup>2</sup> theory. In response, the United

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<sup>2</sup> This theory was supported by Fidel Castro, as a way to spread communism in Latin America by means of nuclei of guerrilla warfare to foster the revolution. As a reaction, the "anti-foco"

States in the early 1960's promoted as part of the Alliance for Progress program the "antifoco" theory which was eagerly accepted and incorporated as operational doctrine by most Latin American military organizations. Communism was the perceived common threat to the region. The antifoco theory of National Security and Development Doctrine encouraged Latin American militaries to commit themselves to "nation building" efforts and "civic action" programs.

"Che" Guevara's death in Bolivia signaled the failure of the communist foco initiative, and his death resulted in a lessening both of the perceived threat and of U.S. military and economic aid in Latin America. The "antifoco" theory underwent a transformation by Latin American militaries, which when acting as statesmen and politicians in the name of internal defense against terrorist and communists established military governments in various countries at various times.

Most politicians in Argentina, have come to view the National Security and Development Doctrine as an overreaction to a weak communist threat and a convenient excuse for the military to take over the legitimate civilian government.

Now that the "terrorist/communist" threat in the region has been vanquished and the civilian populace of each country tired

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theory was developed under the broader policy of Alliance for Progress, promoted by the Kennedy administration. It can be seen as the origin of the U.S. sponsored "National Security and Development Doctrine" during the 1960's, that was the ideological framework that shaped a new model of civic-military relations in Latin America, with a local interpretation in each country.

of the economic and political ruin wrought by successive military governments, a wave of democracy is now break over most of Latin America. With the lapsing of East-West conflict that dominated global politics since World War II, the United States as the time and money to address its new perceived threat to the "national security": drugs and drug trafficking in Latin America.

In 1981 the U.S. Congress amended the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, expanding the Department of Defense (DOD) authority to allow it to support law enforcement activities. The FY 1989 Authorization Act directed DOD to act as the single lead agency of the federal government in the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transport of illegal drugs to the United States, and also authorized the use of the U.S. National Guard in support of drug enforcement activities.

On several recent occasions, as during the Twenty-seventh Inter-American Armies Conference (November 1987), the U.S. has advocated a keen interest in the establishment of a hemispheric military organization to tackle the drug issue. The initiative was rejected at that time by all the Latin American Armies.

Beginning in 1989 the U.S. Chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) has lobbied, with modest success, the Board to create such an agency. The IADB is the natural forum to discuss all integrated inter-American military efforts to counter drug trafficking. As the counterdrug issue is a common hemispheric issue, IADB action is critical. Over militarization must be avoided; any IADB agreement must have the complete

approval of the OAS and each national government. Without firm civilian governmental guidance and oversight, military action and solutions tend to destabilize fragile Latin American democracies.

The "Discriminate Deterrence Report" (issued in January 1988 by the Commission On Integrated Long-Term Strategy) talks about third world conflicts and interests, and points out:

"The United States needs to work with its Third World allies at developing cooperative forces. The United States has a lot to learn from the Soviet Union in this regard. Soviet efforts to advance and defend their interests in less developed countries are typically supported by the familiar cast of characters of their "Soviet Bloc" -- Cubans, Nicaraguans, Vietnamese, North Koreans, East Europeans. These cooperating forces are lead and financed by Moscow, even when not tightly controlled from there [Moscow]. Support may also come from quasi-allies, such as Libya or the PLO, whose interests sometimes diverge from those of the Soviet Union, but who are available for heavy duty on other occasions. The entire operation carries an enormous advantage for the Soviet Union, both in minimizing its own risks of confrontation with the West and in making available troops that blend readily into the environment." (Discriminate Deterrence, Chapter II, 4, page 20).

My reflection on this statement causes me to make a comparison between the "war" on drugs and the experience of implementing the National Security Doctrine of the 1960's. In Argentina the scars persist, the result of a local implementation of such a doctrine that is in conflict with the late 1970's U.S. stance on human rights. Should the United States "regret" not learning from the Soviet Union success employing "cooperative forces", and seek to rectify the situation in the future by developing alliances to shift the "heavy duty" of fighting a drug

war using "cooperative forces" in an attempt to have confederates do what it can not politically do itself, I think that Argentine interests probably coincide in quality but not in intensity. The problem in the United States may be grave enough to cause the employment of U.S. Armed Forces internally; the same is not true in Argentina, where the drug problem is only nascent and hopefully will never be critical. Recent Argentine history has been to put its Armed Forces back in the barracks. Nevertheless, I strongly support the notion that, should the time come when the Argentine Congress says "go", the Argentine military must be prepared to take effective action.

The recent history of the Argentine Armed Forces' internal intervention is well known and the sensitivity of Argentine politicians against intervention is real. The military itself is tired of assuming governmental functions and responsibilities for which it is not prepared. Despite the emotional reluctance by both parties, should Argentina follow the U.S. lead and make counterdrug efforts a matter of "national security", then all national instruments must be considered, the military being one. This does not mean that the military can resolve the problem by itself. Nevertheless any contribution made by the military to national survival is legitimate.

A conventional military solution requires an enemy. I see this type of "war" as similar to the "dirty war" fought against subversion: outlawed criminal groups gathered in cellular organizations, operating amongst innocent people, terrorism, et

cetera. The one difference is that the ideological factor is absent. It is a commercial enterprise, albeit illegal, motivated by profit, willing to take risk for financial reward rather than subverting societal and governmental order.

In this "War on Drugs" the enemy has two faces: one, the supply face (the retailer, trafficker, producer, financier); the other, the demand face (the daughter, husband, son, wife). One party does not have the moral advantage: good as against evil. Both are equally responsible for the erosion of societal values.

Conventional military tactics can not be employed against this two headed foe. A new tactic must be developed. The difficulty lies with how to identify friend from foe. (It should be noted that if the Armed Forces are to be involved, it will be to the detriment of its conventional preparedness.) Again, the situation very closely parallels the antisubversive "dirty war".

If national survival is at stake, the cost incurred by letting conventional preparedness lapse is justified. The society at large must also be willing to accept the trade-off of some individual rights to ensure an effective solution. The level of the threat will determine the amount of freedom society will have to give up. The nation's statesmen are the ones who have to determine the point of equilibrium. The dilemma was best described in the final communiqué of February 1990 Cartagena Drug Summit, where the Presidents of Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and the United States agreed that:

"The control of illegal trafficking in drugs is essentially a law enforcement matter. However, because

of its magnitude and the different aspects involved, and in keeping with the sovereign interest of each State and its own judicial system, the armed forces in each of the countries, within their own territory and national jurisdiction, may also participate. The Parties may establish bilateral and multilateral understandings for cooperation in accordance with their interests, needs and priorities." (Cartagena Declaration, point B-3, pp 6.)

In the United States some risky steps have been taken which could increase the probability of military internal intervention. The magnitude of the problem suggests the use of all the national resources should be the challenge to overcome. For the moment, the support given to external law enforcement activities by the U.S. Armed Forces is considered acceptable. Not acceptable is direct action employed internal to the United States. It is a real contradiction in terms, that in the U.S. the democratic model: the U.S. military can not perform internal police functions, but can to do so in other countries. It does not help to understand the underlying principles by which this sort of decision is made. It appears to be a distorted extrapolation of democracy.

Right now the drug threat in Argentina is not large enough to imagine the internal intervention of the Armed Forces. Should the situation be a matter of concern, then all necessary steps must be taken to prevent worsening the problem and reduce it as much as possible. The body politic, civilian and military, wants to avoid the Armed Forces' intervention, for reasons previously given. Although military intervention may not be desirable, the efficacy of military intervention should, nonetheless be

considered.

Right now Argentine law enforcement agencies are not overwhelmed. The awareness of the problem at all levels will keep the issue under control. Should it not be the case, then all the precautions and preemptive measures will be in place. It should be noted that in light of the assessment that law enforcement agencies are not currently overwhelmed, any strategy should consider the exhaustion of law enforcement means and capabilities first before employing the Armed Forces as a measure of last resort.

Admiral Emilio Osses, Chairman of the Argentine Joint Staff, thinks that for the moment there is very little for the military to do in the counterdrug effort. He acknowledges that some auxiliary tasks could be accomplished by the military, but only within legal framework, which right now does not exist. The Joint Staff is working on an Internal Security bill to be submitted to Congress. No drug related matters are included in the proposed bill.

The Air Force is the only Armed Service working on its own with a counterdrug program. It has donated three Pucara aircraft to Colombia to assist Colombia in its War on Drugs in addition to providing pilot training and instruction to maintenance technicians. The Air Force, with the cooperation of the U.S. Air Force, is trying to put into service two TPS-43 Westinghouse radars to cover the northern border. In June 1990, it will conduct a joint air control exercise with the Border Guard and

the Airport Police.

As revealed in my interview with Brigadier General Alberto Settel, Army Deputy Secretary General, who reports directly to the head of the Army, the only counterdrug effort currently mounted by the Army is screening male draftees male citizens and active duty enlisted personnel, for drug use and/or addiction. Test results indicate minor but increasing use. The Army is very reluctant to become involved in what it perceives as a purely law enforcement matter, especially without a comprehensive national law that spells out the Armed Forces' role. He also stated that the Armed Forces should not seek or encourage its participation.

The Navy is not doing much either. Navy statistics indicate that among its personnel drug use and/or addiction is minimal. The Argentina Navy participated in Inter-American Naval Specialized Conference on Narcotics Trafficking, held in Caracas, Venezuela during August 1985. This conference was the first and last on the subject, and no other conference has been scheduled. At the Inter-American Naval Specialized Conference on Coastal and Riverine Operations (Guayaquil, Ecuador, 1986), the Argentine Navy presented a paper titled "Tactics to Counter Guerrilla Operations in Coastal and Riverine Operations as It Relates to Narcotrafficking and Arms Smuggling".

The Navy also shares the Army's and Joint Staff's opinion that there is a lack of clear consensus and no legal framework which allows its participation in counterdrug efforts. With

consensus and a clear legal framework the Navy could provide auxiliary support in riverine and sea control, and most particularly in maritime shipping control. A simplistic view see no role for the Argentine Navy because it is assumed that Buenos Aires has a cocaine HCl outlet towards Europe or USA, and make sense to consider as more efficient to control and inspect ships before leaving the port, instead of controlling the shipping at sea. But cases like the "Mar Pacifico" makes clear that there is not a logic or standard trafficking pattern. On the contrary, those patterns not necessarily follows an economic path. The specific value of drugs, introduces the factor that "no logic" make sense, because drug will follow unexpected patterns. Anyhow, the result is the need to control the sea, considering all possible routes, some of which will be more "typical" than others, but assuming all with the same probability. Paradoxically the more unexpected are the more likely. As the previously relayed story of the Mar Pacifico illustrates, the primary mission of all navies--control of the sea--should apply. It would be necessary to adapt and coordinate this role with the Prefectura Naval (Coast Guard), in a similar way like the U.S. Navy and the law enforcement agency.

The military's perspective of its role differs markedly from that of civilian Executive Branch. The Vice President stated in my interview that sooner or later the Armed Forces will be committed to the War on Drugs as coordinators or centralizers. This view is also shared by Dr. Lestelle, Director of the

National Narcotics Secretariat. President Menem in his address at the opening of the Seventh CICAD Conference on 27 March 1990, and aired nationally on television, stated that he supported the death penalty for traffickers, and used very military-like language to say current effort is "combat", "war", and a "fight" against the "real armies" of traffickers. President Menem has recently gone on record to offering Argentine troops to Colombia should they be requested to fight against narcotraffickers in Colombia. Future history will show us just how the national leadership prioritizes its values, balancing both internal and external national interests and policies. The need of the Argentine government to approach the Armed Forces to maintain his power, is part of its current political equation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Controlling and/or interdicting cocaine HCl production and trafficking in Latin America to supply United States consumption is an extremely difficult problem with no single solution. It is the main issue affecting the external relations of the United States with the rest of the hemisphere. The move by the United States to obtain international cooperation is being dealt with seriously by Argentina. No sovereignty sensitivity exist. Argentina is doing its best to respond to the U.S. call to arms.

The magnitude of the drug problem in Argentina is not comparable to that of the United States. There are nascent signs that indeed a "hydraulic effect" into Argentina is taking place. Statistics indicate that in relative terms, only small to moderate amounts of cocaine HCl transit Argentina on its way to the bigger European and U.S. markets. The trafficking standard pattern has been determined but the drug dealers always have alternatives. In country cocaine HCl refining capability is insignificant. There is increasing smuggling of some chemicals and precursors used in cocaine HCl refining from Argentina into Bolivia, where refining technology is improving. The possibility of Argentina to become a new Colombia is by the moment remote; Brasil can be more likely a substitute. There is no evidence to suggest a relation exists between narcotraffickers and terrorist groups in Argentina.

Marijuana in Argentina is a problem only of internal consumption. A small local production complements the much

larger illegal importation from Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and Chile.

The current legal system framework is being up dated to allow for more efficient control of illegal drugs and other substances, chemicals, precursors, and money laundering.

Argentine antinarcotics policy has national priority and necessary internal and external cooperation is being implemented. Law enforcement agencies are not overwhelmed by drug related problems and feel that they will maintain control. Law enforcement agencies are overcoming traditional interagency problems and rivalries. Corruption exists, but is individual and does not appear to be institutional.

The higher level of Argentine government policy makers foresee the possible participation of the Armed Forces in counternarcotic efforts. The military is reluctant to participate unless a comprehensive law and a clear role is established. Despite the current situation in which the military have not much to do, they would have an auxiliary role if necessary. The problem should be beforehand analyzed to avoid improvisation.

Agreements at the international political level are beyond rhetoric, and several initiatives are already accomplished. A public consensus exists in Argentina that allows the government to engage in serious action. The U.S. DEA has permanent access to Argentine law enforcement agencies and it critical to Argentina's counternarcotics efforts.

## V. EPILOGUE

It is clear that the struggle against the complicated problem of drug addiction must be addressed with a global approach. The two heads of the same dragon--demand and supply--must be attacked simultaneously the same time.

The magnitude of the problem of drug consumption in the United States, clearly manifest in its external policy, is driving the international arena toward cooperative but demanding postures.

The balance of resource allocation in this "war" is one of the challenges facing the United States: how to provide enough aid to some countries as to make a real difference in reducing the supply, while at the same time cover financing local efforts aimed at reducing demand. A unique and perfect balance will provide an early solution.

As external favorable international opinion and cooperation is more difficult to obtain than the domestic, my feeling is the greater payoff lies in trying to solve the domestic demand problem. I know I run the risk of sounding simplistic, but I take it because I am concerned about the United States. My opinion is based on living two years in the United States, and observing the unique American life-style. I have seen nothing in writing that recognizes the observations I make. I have, however, always gotten agreement from U.S. citizens when I have talk to them attempting to validate my arguments. I will attempt

to discuss some key factors that affect U.S. society as a whole, but mainly its youngsters.

The concept of the "self-made man" was one of the elements that has contributed the most to the building of the incredible power of this country. Vast natural resources and a diligent work-ethic completed the picture in which restless men, native or alien, worked hard for a better future. On one hand, the struggle for life and competition creates an incredible wealth, when compared to the rest of the world, which, on the other hand, leads an ever insatiable consumer society. Imagination is not yet exhausted, but almost all things imaginable are available to Americans who can afford the price. Almost everything is within reach to the industrious and the need to fulfill desires is enormous. Life is mercilessly viewed as a contest between winners and losers--nobody wants to fail. The measure of success is the kind and amount of "gadgets" possessed.

American children experience work and its responsibilities too soon. It is not infrequent for a nine year old to work at odd jobs and earn his own money. Their parents not only allow, but generally encourage, children to do so. This work is performed not to fulfil basic needs, but to allow for the purchase of desired goods. It is a way to independence for both children and parents.

The country is very extended and distances are huge. Law authorizes children to drive at age 16, in some states, age 14. This regulation is designed to solve functional transportation

problems; parents can not drive children everywhere, therefore it is logical that children do it themselves. The driving privilege is a big step toward independence; the next: college (at Dad's expense) or job far away from home. Children are willing to go away and parents encourage them to start their own lives. In other cases situation is worst: about a million of teenagers around 13/14 years old, flee every year from their homes for different reasons. Independence is honored again, this time by living alone.

With all this abundant freedom, nothing could possibly upset the American kid. Wrong. There is one exception: alcohol consumption is restricted to persons 21 and older. Prohibited and frustrated, the American teenager simply drinks undercover. They have real fun in getting drunk; it is at the center of teenage parties. The rationale: adults drink, so why can't they. It is the rush to grow up.

I am amused by the aggressiveness of the concept of "women's liberation". It is an issue that is raised everywhere. My question: What is the ultimate goal of women? Is it that they are trying to be like men? Nothing need to be proven, no differences exist among sexes but the obvious. I maintain that women are losing more than gaining. They gain legal rights, but lose rights accorded by custom. Equality between men and women is fair to be claimed, but I would suggest equality not be sought by women in all the cases. I see competition everywhere, in

school, at college or on the job, even between married couples. Should both of the married couple have jobs, both struggle to be the best; women, in general, do not assume a secondary position. Everybody must be a winner in whatever he or she is doing. In the legal arena, the prenuptial agreement is a formality that accedes to and abets the materialistic "me first" approach to marriage. Where separate checking accounts for each spouse is common, there exists a clear sense what is in his account is his and in her account, her's. Both maintain a certain independence. I do not know which is the cause or effect, but more than 55% of the U.S. American couples are divorced or separated.

High mobility is another characteristic of the American way of life. Promotion very often means moving very often. The desire for upward mobility is stronger than setting roots in too many cases. The environment and friends changed all too frequently. I have noted that in some cases children do not want to make friends, to avoid pain of losing friends when moving. Competition again claims its reward.

In putting all the above arguments together, I feel that family and friendship values are significantly eroded. What happens is that American children are forced, too soon, to face unprepared the rigors of an aggressive modern life. They are exposed too young to temptations without adequate parental guidance. Children are handed life with no survival tools.

Children are unwittingly handicapped, are nonetheless excited by the glitter of the modern world and spurred by peer pressure.

I feel in the United States youngsters are too much alone, and loneliness drives them to vice. It starts first with alcohol and "soft" drugs. Once confident, they sometimes set out on the road of road of cocaine or crack.

In Argentina, almost everything is depends on the government. There is virtually a complete absence of competition. True, national development is hindered, but family values remain strong. I am not arguing for the promotion of Socialism, on the contrary, I think that a median path can be found. Moderate, balanced competition, applied at the right time, in the right manner and among the right people will produce moderate growth that will allow time and room for compensating parallel and harmonious human/societal development. Its goal should be to evolve at the same time in both material and ethical fields.

I think it is fair to say that the pace of modern life is eroding the concept of family in Argentina, albeit not at the pace of the United States, and due to its own local causes. Nonetheless, I have no doubts as the United States a "model" to the world, U.S. youngsters are likewise "models" to the youngsters of the world. In Argentina at least, young people copy costumes and habits from their U.S. counterparts for good or for bad.

After just arriving in this great country, I was taught

about American values. I learned to admire the principles on which the United States draws life, but also to live and experience for two years, the many facets of U.S. society. This said, I, nevertheless think that unless United States modifies its life style for the better and address the issues I have mentioned, the so called War on Drugs will be lost.

**APPENDIX I**

**COMPARED NATIONAL STATISTICS OF CASES, SEIZURES AND  
DETENTIONS OF LAW OFFENDERS.**

COMPARED NATIONAL STATISTICS OF: CASES, SEIZURES, AND DETENTIONS OFFENDERS LAW 20.771 AND DECREES/86

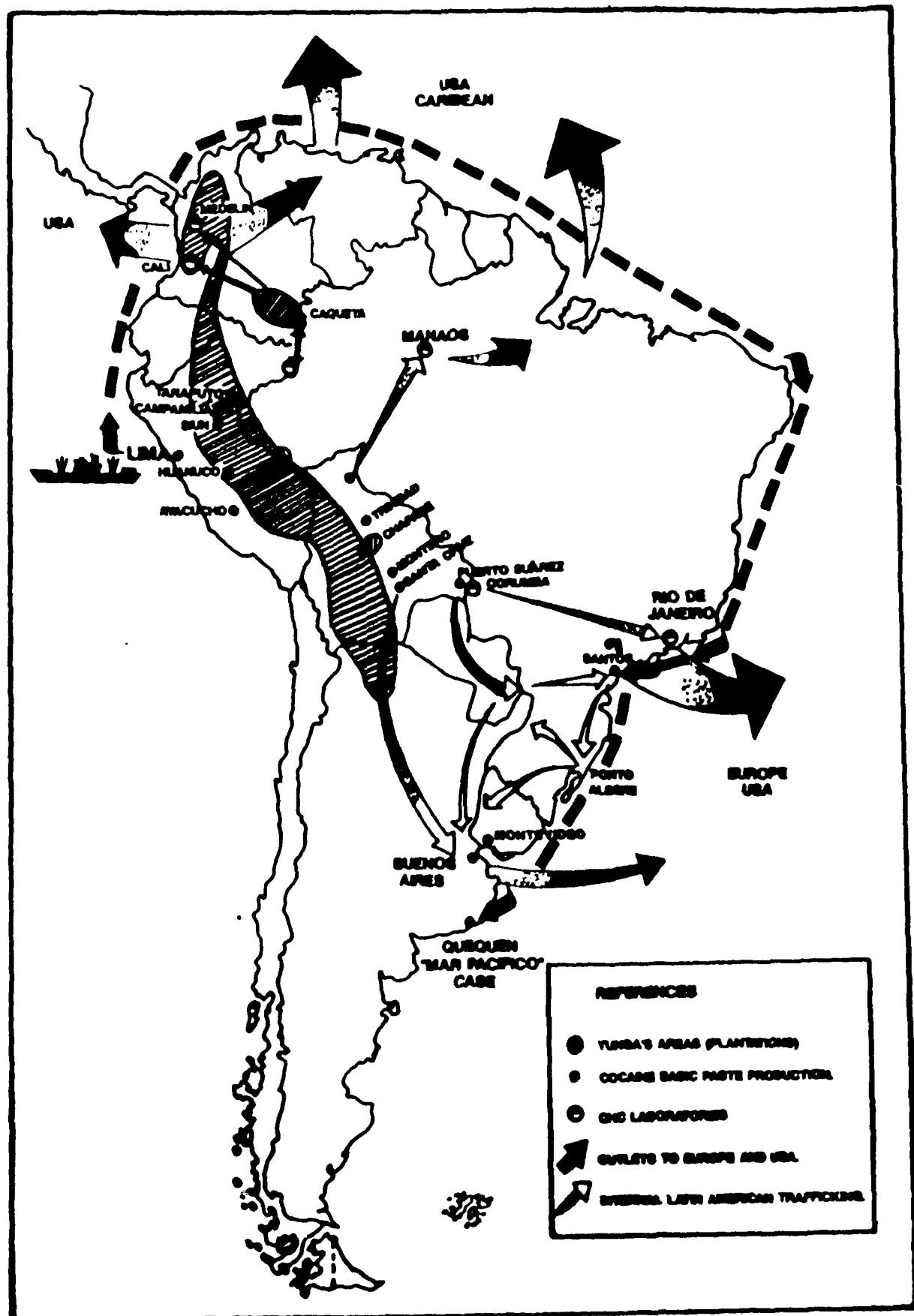
SUBSTANCE	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989*
MARIJUANA CT	9.93-626	330.184	173.702	290.496	744.490	745.691	1.065.547	1.925.136	2.096.095	2.572.325	1138.275
MARIJUANA PL	u. 558	185	363	233	427	1.292	430	2.797	672	2.092	378
HABISH	g.			223	5	492	375	373	65	679	72
COCAINE HCl	g.12.382	32.318	26.791	19.414	74.339	141.781	157.456	361.880	606.698	1.102.550	198.401
COCAINE LEAF	kg11.144	11.669	5.369	9.446	11.774	13.132	13.820	25.000	30.340	38.027	10.297
PSYCHOPHARM.	u452.460	95.369	17.934	4.822	1.073	374	35.181	6.275	13.766	7.942	5.858
PSYCHOPHARM.	g.93.677	127.280	249	5.065	31.819	2.072	2.943	19.246	454	44	220
OPUM	g. 295	422	234	31.378	300	40	48	100.101	1.234	55	3
MORPHINE	g. 154	530	74	6.249	6.296	89		40.344	10	82	
MORPHINE	u.						77	72	77	118	61
LD	g. 0	21	53	2.828	1.406	26	5.611	1.525	2.345	163	65
ACETONE	1.							62	80	4.262	553
ETHER	1.							1.200	4.089	4.607	997
INTERVENTION	876	784	731	752	784	1.052	2.224	3.208	2.779	3.210	1.013
APPROPRIATION	1.317	1.387	1.491	1.439	1.319	1.710	3.984	5.591	4.838	7.515	3.443

\* 1st SEMESTER 1989 - g=GRAM - kg=KILOGRAM - 1= LITER - u=UNIT - d=DOSE

**APPENDIX II**

**SOUTH AMERICA'S COCAINE OUTLET**

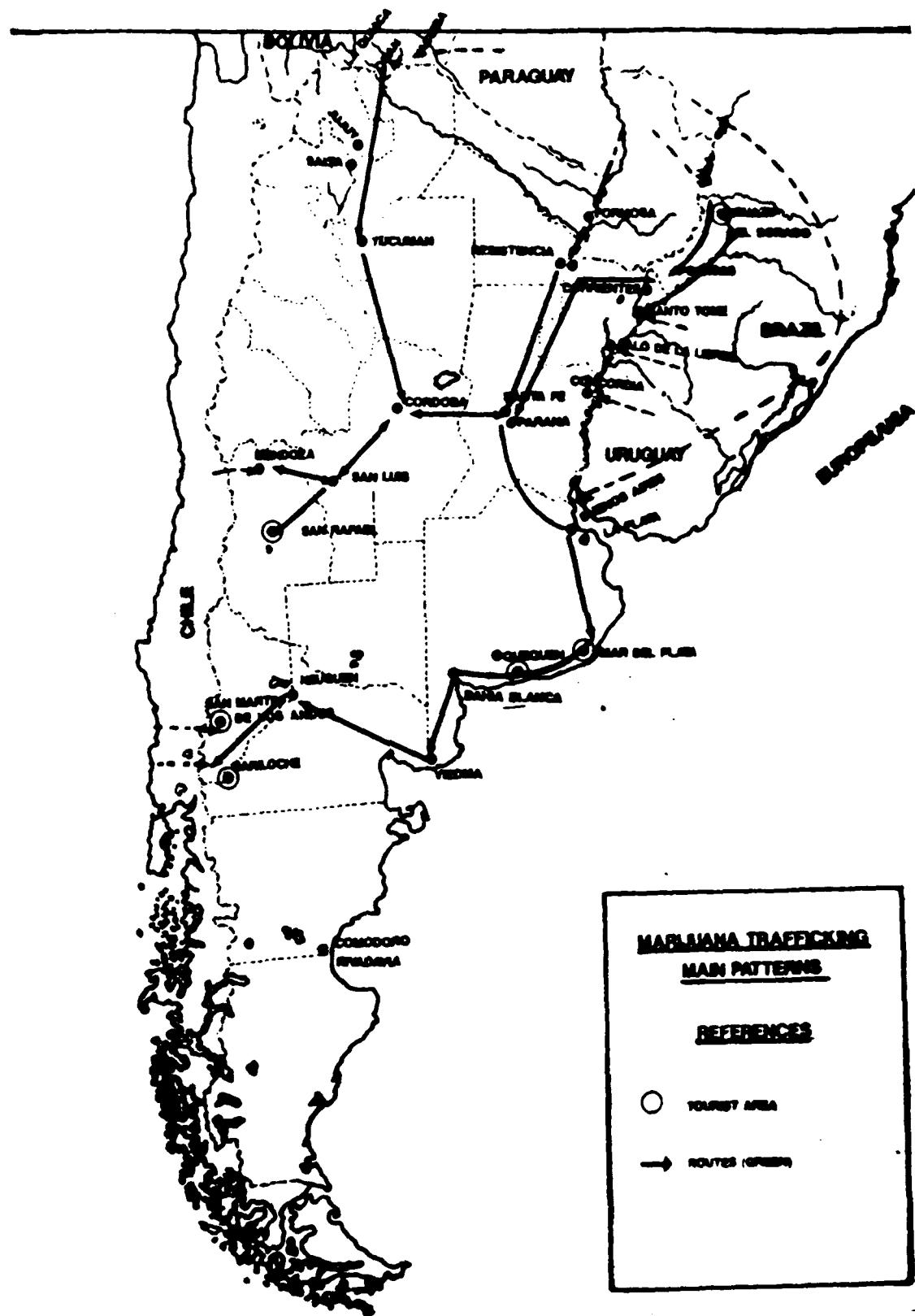
# SOUTH AMERICA'S COCAINE OUTLET



**APPENDIX III**

**MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING MAIN PATTERNS IN ARGENTINA.**

MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING  
MAIN PATTERNS IN ARGENTINA  
ARGENTINA

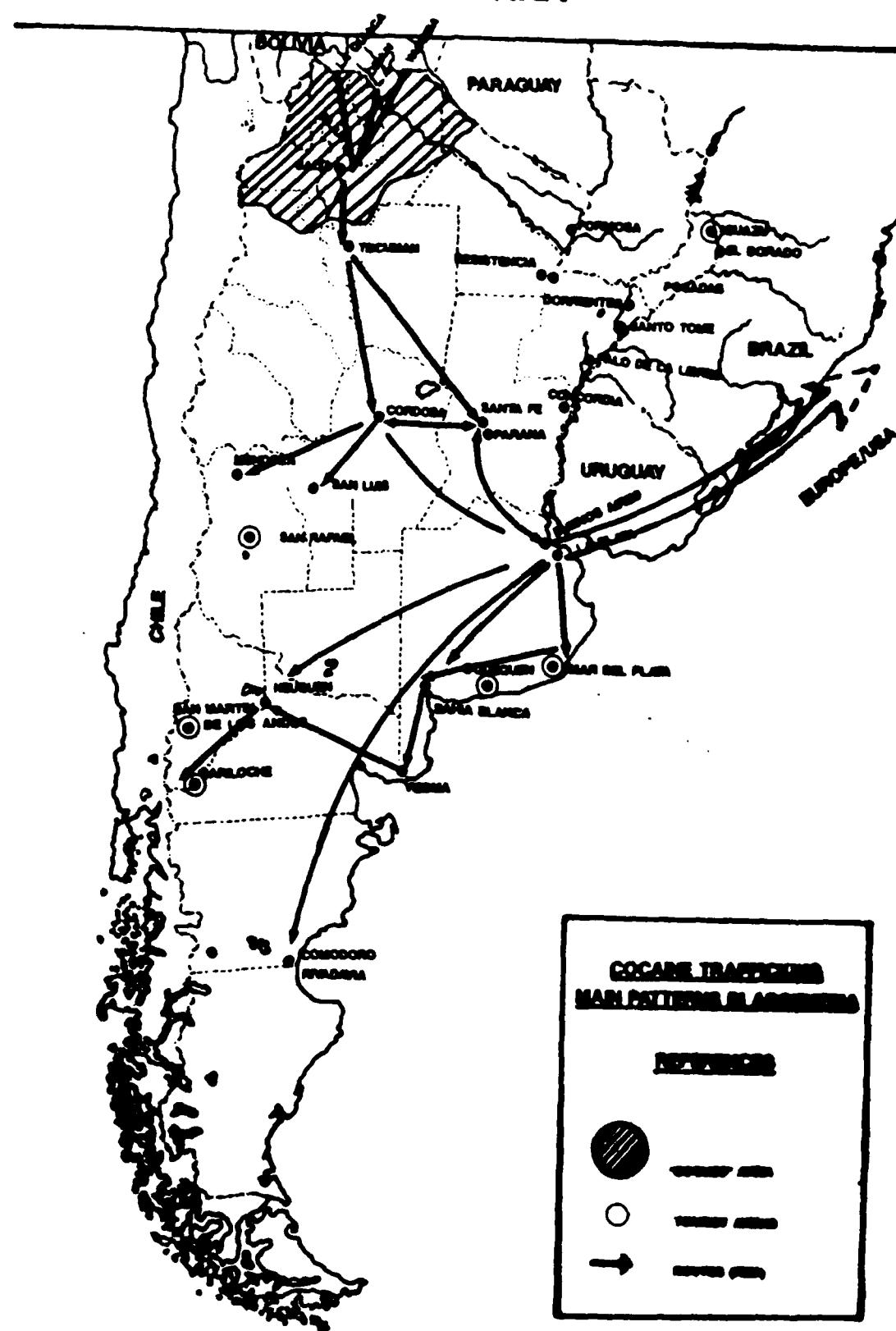


**APPENDIX IV**

**COCAINE TRAFFICKING MAIN PATTERNS IN ARGENTINA.**

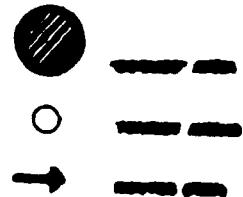
COCAINE TRAFFICKING  
MAIN PATTERNS IN ARGENTINA

ARGENTINA



COCAINE TRAFFICKING  
MAIN PATTERNS IN ARGENTINA

LEGENDA



**APPENDIX V**

**PARTIAL RESULTS OF "SIMULTANEOUS OPERATION", BUENOS AIRES GROUP.**

PARTIAL RESULTS OF "SIMULTANEOUS OPERATION", BUENOS AIRES GROUP.

- Coca leaves.....	3352,070 Kg.
- Cocaine HCl.....	40,344 Kg.
- Marihuana.....	27,649 Kg.
- Hashish.....	050 Kg.
- L.S.D.....	8 Doses
- Interventions.....	560 Events
- Apprehensions.....	484
- Identified persons.....	350,000
- Inspected ships.....	185
- Inspected airplanes.....	378
- Inspected trains.....	250
- Inspected vehicles.....	65,000
- Inspected pleasure boats.....	1,600

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